

NEW PUBLICATIONS.

A GOOD NOVEL.

THE BABY'S GRANDMOTHER. A Novel. By L. B. WALDEN. 16mo, pp. 431. Henry Holt & Co.

Most novelists at the present day feel that they have done their duty by their readers, and used as much material as they can afford, when they have presented one distinct and interesting personage in each of their successive stories. The author of "The Baby's Grandmother" is so lavish as to give us five or six. We recall few recent works of fiction in which the whole company is so entertaining—or at least, the cause of so much entertainment. With the single exception (strange to say) of the hero, there is not an actor or an actress in the little drama who does not show a clear and interesting individuality. "The Baby's Grandmother," however, is not a novel of character. It has nothing to do with the exploration of human nature, the analysis of motives, or the development of moral consequences, and it does not deal so much with types of men and women as with eccentric single figures. The springs of action are accident rather than character. Yet the personages are as sharply drawn and the distinctions between them, in speech and habits, are so well preserved, that we shall probably hear them called admirable character sketches, although there is hardly a glimpse of the whole book. They are simply very accurate, very careful, and very lively studies of individual manner, sometimes of temperament also, and several of them are fresh, if not original. Poor, affectionate, amusing, weak-minded, blundering Teddy is a figure which we do not remember to have seen before in novels, and yet he is so natural and complete that we almost believe that we have known him in real life. He is probably the most marked success of the book. We grew fond of him as we read; and we can hardly forgive the author for his magic and unnecessary dissimilarity from the scene. Gay, beautiful and wilful Lady Matilda, a grandmother at thirty-seven, is a delightful figure who keeps our sympathies throughout, and her daughter and her son-in-law are a pair of prigs described to the life with great humor. The Tuftins are effective foils to the charming society at Overton; but we confess that we find their vulgar vivacity tiresome. A little of it would have availed every necessary object. Challoner, the hero—if the story can be said to have a hero—is a failure. So weak and dull a creature is entirely unworthy of the disturbance which is made over him, and any satisfaction we may feel at his fate is for Lady Matilda's sake, not his own. The construction of the story is remarkably neat and effective; and there are several scenes which deserve to be called masterly. For example, in the interview between Juliet Appleby and Mary Tuftin, in which the former young lady undresses to disclose to Mary the perfidy of her betrothed, but is met by a stern incredulity:

New Publications.

HARPER & BROTHERS, New-York,

PUBLISH THIS DAY:

THE VOYAGE OF THE "VIVIAN" TO THE NORTH POLE AND BEYOND.

Adventures of Two Youths in the Open Polar Sea. By THOMAS W. KNOX, Author of "The Boy Travellers in the Far East." "The Young Natives," &c., &c. With Colored Frontispiece. Numerous Illustrations, and Maps of the Polar Regions. Pages 288. \$1.00, cloth, \$2.50.

The fresh interest given to Polar study by the story of the Jeannette and the work of Lieutenant Greely, on Lady Franklin Bay, has led to the preparation of the present volume. It is especially intended for youthful readers, who I hope that those of mature years may find instruction and amusement in its pages. He has pursued the plan which met with favor in his previous works, and endeavored to present an array of facts upon a ground-work of fiction, in the same manner as in "The Boy Travellers in the Far East."—Extract from Preface.

UNIVERSAL HISTORY.

The Oldest Historical Group of Nations and the Greeks. By LEOPOLD VON BANKE, Edited by G. W. PROTHERO, Fellow and Tutor of King's College.

Circumlocution, pp. 301. \$1.00, cloth, \$2.50.

We are glad that the translation has been undertaken by so competent an historian as G. W. Prothero. No Scholar has ever had so large a group of books of the fundamental principles of history, as has, as far as we are anxious to disseminate from a school, the permanent elements of history. His treatment is not content with merely following the general course of National development, but traces the interconnection of human affairs. After working at this problem in the history of Europe, especially in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the general historian devotes to his declining years to formulating his results. The value of his work cannot be overestimated. A mind trained in historical criticism and a judgment practiced in historical discrimination have been set to extract from the records of the past history of mankind the active principles of human progress. The result is a clear sketch drawn by a true hand, and full of suggestiveness.—Contemporary Review, London.

MISS TOMMY:

A Medieval Romance; and In a House-Boat: A Journal. By the Author of "John Halifax, Gentleman." Illustrated. Pages vi, 254. 12mo, cloth (unten with Harper's Library Edition of Miss Mulock's Works), 50 cents. Paper, 50 cents.

"Miss Tommy" is the only story of that kind that has come from a character of Miss Mulock for several years. It purports to be a "real" story, not because it has any connection with the Middle Ages, but because it is a tale of the two most interesting periods of advanced civilization. The author is singular, and is content with simple grace. The novel is a clear sketch drawn by a true hand, and full of suggestiveness.—Contemporary Review, London.

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